

CONVENTIONS IN AUCTION

SOME DANGER THAT IT MAY BECOME A "SIGNAL GAME."

What is meant by the opening bid a serious question many times. The call of No Trumps may mean either strength or weakness—some hands.

Some years ago when the whist craze was at its height the subject of conventions for that game was pretty well ventilated and the officers of the American Whist League were finally called upon to put some curb on what were then classed as "private conventions," or understandings between partners which could not be inferred or understood by their adversaries.

The outcome was that persons using these private conventions were obliged to state them to their adversaries before play began, and as some of these affairs covered two or three pages of typewriting the natural consequence was that the adversaries, who were usually thinking about some private signals of their own, paid little or no attention to the explanations, and finally it became the custom at all the big tournaments, even for the champions, to head off any explanations by saying: "Go ahead and play what you like. We don't care what your system is."

When bridge came in it was hailed as a relief from the endless private convention schemes that had crept into whist, and practically the only thing to ask about among American players was the discard, which is not settled yet. In England and in some parts of America it was also necessary to inquire about the lead in case the third hand doubled a no-trump.

Those who preferred to have a heart led when they doubled no trumps usually combined it with the strength discard and when asked the usual question they replied, "Heart and strong." Those who led the top of a weak suit in a doubled no-trump and discarded from weakness always answered with, "Weak and weak."

One would occasionally find the two systems mixed and the answer would be "Heart and weak" or "Weak and strong," the first named always referring to the lead and the second to the discard. In America it is taken for granted that every one who knows anything of the game will lead a heart, so that the one word "weak" or "strong" was sufficient.

In auction this question of the discard is still but little understood and has not yet simmered down to any stated convention.

The only other convention of any importance that crept into bridge was that of leading trumps through the dummy's spade makes when the third hand doubled, but this was never settled by any particular rule and players usually followed their own bent in the matter. Taken altogether straight bridge was remarkably free from conventions of any kind, but its offspring, auction, seems likely to drift back into the signal game, as the whist players call it.

In auction as in all games in which a perfect understanding between the partners is important there is a constant tendency to introduce conventions in the bidding more than in the play and the question has naturally arisen as to how far these conventions are legitimate. In the larger clubs certain bids have come to mean certain things.

The heart convention, so called, or the lead of the best heart to a doubled no-trump, is never used in auction because the player on the right of the declarer has usually named a suit before he doubles and his partner knows what to lead. In case no suit has been named it is conventional to lead a black suit at auction instead of the red one which was the rule at bridge.

The reason for this convention is that if the third hand has a big suit and can defeat a no-trump, but cannot afford to call two tricks in a suit to show it, his suit cannot be either hearts or diamonds, so it must be black and he cannot risk the danger of being left to play it if he declares it. He might have eight solid spade tricks, for instance, but he dare not bid a little slam in spades just to get a spade led up to a declared no-trump. Ten to one the declarer of the no-trump would let him play it. Even three in clubs is a risky call against a no-trump.

The theory underlying this conventional lead of a black suit to the player who has doubled a no-trump without showing any suit of his own is that the no-trump may be weak in that very suit and the bid has been made in order to shut out the informatory call. Examples of this are to be found in all the text books.

Another lead which is almost a convention as far as interpreting its meaning is concerned is the original lead of a trump. As the opening lead is always up to and never through the declarer, or maker of the trump, this may seem to place the declarer at an advantage; but those who use the lead insist that it is less likely to do harm than any other lead when all the plain suits in their hand are either tenace or single honors guarded.

From such a hand as four to the ace queen in one suit, three to the king in another, three to the queen in the third and three little trumps, the best opening is the trump. There are four tricks in the other suits which are not led.

The conventions which are at present recognized by those who bid on their hands as if they were playing bridge are comparatively few and simple and are easily divided into bids which wish support and those that give it. No trumps means a hand which has no strong red make in it but which is good enough in two or three suits to justify an original no-trump call, subject to revision. It invites the partner to shift to hearts if he can, but is better than inviting him to go to trumps third hand.

Any bid of one trick in a red suit means only an average red call, with no chance for a no-trump and probably not strong enough to insist on the declaration in case it is overcalled. Two tricks in a red suit is usually a conventional request to the partner to let it alone.

One trick in clubs means about the same as in a red suit, but is never made with any intention of playing it. Two clubs means a very strong suit, which should be of great assistance in filling out a no-trump, but is good for two or three if the declarer is left to play it. Some players bid two clubs on the same strength as on two spades. Then it is almost a command to go no trumps.

TWO CIVIL LIST ROMANCES

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entirely justifies. In the upper portion of the face and head the resemblance to Augustus is already strong, but from viewed from the point of view suggested the likeness of this new portrait to other official presentations of the Emperor becomes convincing.

The following true tale of Prussian royal tape is going round the press in Germany.

A year ago the paymaster of a regiment disbursed a sum of ten cents for a piece of military cloth. In May the military audit authorities pointed out that the piece of cloth should have cost only 35 cents. It was declared "two cents has been paid in excess," which the Treasury, in a moment of unusual liberality, undertook to pay.

In order that this fact might be brought to the knowledge of all concerned a large part of the army machine had to be set in motion and up to the present it has been found that seventeen persons have contributed more or less strenuously to the work. For example, at the audit office the matter passed through the hands of five clerks before it reached the regiment concerned. When it got to the regiment twelve persons, from the Colonel down to the Adjutant's orderly, had to deal with it. A few allied departments have yet to be notified, after which the memorandum dealing with the excess charge will begin its return journey to the audit office.

Paris has been described as a paradise for women, a purgatory for men and a hell for horses. The number of horses steadily decreases under motor competition and the horses that remain have to perform the automobile as well as the work of various societies for the better treatment of their race, for to survive in these days they must be able to do the work of a dozen.

The army authorities take a census of the number of horses, and the figures for 1911 show 72,458 in Paris, compared with 96,098 in 1901. This means that in ten years, the number of horses has decreased 24,210, or almost exactly a quarter. The military authorities are somewhat perturbed over this fact. It is true that for transport of war material and provisions automobile traction has replaced the use of many horses, but there remain the needs of the cavalry and artillery. The old standard for trained horses, the omnibus companies, have been of no assistance, as automobiles are rapidly supplanting horse drawn stages.

Dr. Alexis Carrel of the Rockefeller Institute of New York is visiting Paris and has delivered a lecture before an audience of scientists on the life of tissues as it exists outside the organism of which they are a part. His account of his work was deeply interesting, although not so sensational as some reports printed last year in French papers have his discoveries appear, as he has been represented as succeeding in grafting limbs of one animal on another.

"In my studies of latent life," he said, "I have found that life in the tissues and organs dies slowly. I have succeeded in preserving life in fragments of an artery, pieces of skin and fragments of spleen for days, even for a month. A dog whose abdominal aorta was replaced four years ago by a human femoral artery is still alive in a normal state."

The thoracic aorta of another animal was replaced about the same time by a large vein that had been kept several months in cold storage. The operation was a perfect success. At the beginning of last year I undertook some new researches, and with my collaborators I have succeeded in cultivating adult tissues of mammals outside the organism.

"Harrison showed some years ago that fragments of a frog's nervous system could be developed as if they had not been detached from the body. My assistant, Dr. Burrows, has applied the method to the cellular development of a chicken's tissue. With some change in the method I have succeeded in cultivating fragments of tissue taken from a cat, a dog, a guinea pig and a man."

Tissues placed on a glass plate and covered with a natural plasma or liquid serum develop admirably. After some hours the cellular radiance and the halo is seen which proves that the cells continue to develop apart from the body. The life of these cells varies greatly. Cancerous cells die in six or eight days. Cells of spleen or skin can live a month.

"A favorable medium for developing nervous fibres can be found if it will be possible to obtain a regeneration of the nerves by a surgical operation."

Prof. Carrel then dealt with his experiments in healing wounds and finished with the words, spoken with a smile: "Meanwhile the technical results we have obtained in New York are not applied in America. French and German savants, having greater audacity, have been the first to apply them."

Many stories of tragedy and sorrow are centered in the mount de Paris, or French state pawnshop. An official report just issued tells of a child's small silver goblet, probably a christening present, which was pawned in Paris in 1857 for \$2. For fifty-three years the interest was paid regularly by the owners, who never reached the position of being able to redeem the pledge. The interest then stopped, probably because the people who paid it were dead.

The Marquis Guerry on hearing the story instituted a fund of \$20,000, the interest on which is to be used in redeeming similar pledges.

"What struck me most on this visit to America," writes Sarah Bernhardt, "was how the Americans get about. Never in my life have I seen a country with so many automobiles."

THE CHESS PLAYERS' CORNER

SCHLECHTER AND TARRASCH ARE STILL TIED.

Three Additional Scores From This Match Show Some Lovely and Spirited Play—Jaffe Off for Carlsbad—The N. Y. State Association's Summer Meeting.

According to latest despatches to hand, Carl Schlechter of Vienna and Dr. S. Tarrasch of Nuremberg are still tied in their match of seven games up now in progress at the Cologne Chess Club. Owing to some reason or another the players took about five days rest after the conclusion of the eighth game, which was won by Tarrasch. On Friday news came that Schlechter had won the ninth game, which made the score even, each man having won two games to date, while the other five were drawn.

From the three additional games to hand the reader will notice that some highly spirited and interesting play was exhibited in the third, fourth and fifth games of the match. The score of the third game, however, will require some close analysis, especially so at the final stage, when the players agreed to draw. The notes on the fourth and fifth games are taken from the Berliner publication, Der Tag, which were presumably written by Tarrasch. The scores:

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From the three additional games to hand the reader will notice that some highly spirited and interesting play was exhibited in the third, fourth and fifth games of the match. The score of the third game, however, will require some close analysis, especially so at the final stage, when the players agreed to draw. The notes on the fourth and fifth games are taken from the Berliner publication, Der Tag, which were presumably written by Tarrasch. The scores:

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THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 24 Kt-R3 R-K2

THIRD GAME—RUY LOPEZ. Schlechter. Tarrasch. Schlechter. Tarrasch. White. Black. White. Black. 1 P-K4 P-K4 13 P-B3 B-K2 ch 2 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 14 K-R1 R-K2 3 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 15 Kt-R3 R-K2 4 B-K4 B-K2 16 Kt-R3 R-K2 5 Kt-K3 Kt-Q3 17 Q-K2 Kt-K1 6 B-K4 B-K2 18 Kt-K1 Kt-R3 7 P-Q3 P-Q3 19 Kt-R3 R-K2 8 B-K4 B-K2 20 Kt-R3 R-K2 9 P-K4 P-K4 21 Kt-R3 R-K2 10 B-K4 B-K2 22 Kt-R3 R-K2 11 P-Q3 P-Q3 23 Kt-R3 R-K2 12 Kt-K3 K